

MORNING BRIEFING

27 January 1982

El Salvador: Mozote Massacre

The Washington Post article on the Mozote massacre likely contains some elements of truth, although we have nothing

to shed any light on the columnist's charges of "hundreds" of civilians massacred by Army troops.

does indicate that fighting was very heavy in Mozote village, with 30-35 guerrillas and 4 government troops killed. The fact is that out of all the area residents interviewed, the article cites only three witnesses who claimed any knowledge of a massacre.

Large-scale shootings continue to occur on the part of both guerrilla groups and Army troops in various regions of the country, but verification of these incidents is at best extremely difficult and often impossible. With over 4,000 troops involved in a province-wide sweep of Morazan in early December, numerous unarmed civilians probably would have been victims of both accidental and pre-meditated killings on the part of the armed forces. Nothing, however, suggests the levels charged by the guerrillas.

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